



## **Summary of Conservation Activity in Georgia Under the GLCP: 2006-2014**

There are three primary land conservation mechanisms that have been used in Georgia since the Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP) was established in 2006:

- **Fee-title ownership** – acquisition by a government or non-governmental entity for conservation purposes, which should include the incorporation of permanent deed restriction language;
- **Conservation easements** – permanent conservation restrictions on privately-owned land; and
- **Conservation covenants** – 10 or 20-year restrictions to permissible land uses on a property.

*The Georgia state government only participates in fee-title acquisitions and conservation easements.*

### **Fee-title Ownership**

No comprehensive list of all conservation land in Georgia exists. However, analysis of the state's conservation lands database suggests that less than 7 percent of Georgia (under 2.7 million acres) is permanently protected by fee-title or other conservation mechanisms. Due to the uncertainty associated with such analysis, only fee-title acquisitions with which the state government has been involved since the GLCP's inception in 2006 are documented here.

The state government promotes the fee-title protection of conservation land through three funding sources:

- **GLCP grants and loans** have directly funded the permanent protection of 47,525.6 acres of land through 27 projects.
- **Conservation tax credits** have been awarded to 16 fee-title donations by non-state entities covering 1,049 acres.

### **Conservation Easements**

No comprehensive list of all conservation easements in Georgia exists, although the [National Conservation Easements Database](#) is attempting to provide such a resource. GLCP and DNR are in regular communication with the partnership that is constructing the NCED, but haven't yet accomplished an accurate representation of Georgia's easements. Subject to this limitation, the known conservation easements in Georgia can be divided between state-held and non-state held easements.

## State-held Conservation Easements

The State of Georgia holds a total of 49 conservation easements that cover 53,628 acres. Funding sources used to acquire these easements include:

- **GLCP grants** totaling \$255,637 have been awarded to 30 easement projects on 38,275 acres;
- **Conservation tax credits** have been awarded to 45 projects covering 51,884 acres; and
- All state-held easements have benefitted from some form of '**other**' funding, such as landowner donations and non-GLCP grants.

Although the numbers seem to suggest otherwise (30+45=75), financial incentives offered by the state are not mutually exclusive – most state-held easements that received a tax credit also received a GLCP grant.

## Non-State-held Conservation Easements

Most conservation easements in Georgia are held by non-profit conservation organizations. Other non-state easement holders include local governments, authorities and federal agencies. The state assists non-state entities acquiring conservation easements through two mechanisms:

- **GLCP grants and loans** have directly funded the protection of 5,194 acres under eight non-state easements.
- **Conservation tax credits** have indirectly funded 637 non-state conservation easements covering 295,184 acres as of December 2014. Start-up equipment and on-going staff costs of the conservation tax credit program have been a part of the GLCP's budget within GEFA since the inception of conservation tax credits in 2007.

The GLCP provides technical assistance and financing consultations on land conservation projects. For more information, contact Fuller Callaway at 404-584-1035 or [fuller@gefaga.gov](mailto:fuller@gefaga.gov).

